

The Natural Society and Other Writings

By Richard Hunt

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INTRODUCTION

"**Richard Hunt** was one of the most important and original Anarchist thinkers of the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Having begun his political journey in Green Anarchist circles, Hunt later established **Alternative Green** magazine in the early-1990s. His concise analysis of the relationship between the periphery and the core, as well as his reasons behind the ongoing scandal of Third World starvation and poverty in general, led to him breaking the stranglehold of the authoritarian Left and engaging in meaningful dialogue with elements of the so-called Far Right. **Hunt**, who was always a very honest and open-minded individual, refused to be taken in by the accusations of 'fascism' that greeted anyone brave enough to co-operate with those decentralists who did not come from a typical Left-wing background and his collaboration with the National Revolutionary Faction (NRF) in the staging of the highly-successful **Anarchist Heretics Fair** in Brighton, during May 2000, led to him being demonised by the ironically-named 'anti-fascists' of Searchlight magazine and other neo-totalitarian drones on the Left." [1]

These words, while not including everything important, provide a far greater introductory summary to Richard Hunt than I could write; a man who, if not for the likes of reactionary leftists within Anarchist milieus, would have become known as the revolutionary thinker he truly was.

A set designer before and during his early eco-anarchist days, Richard Hunt (1933-2012) worked for the BBC on such shows as Doctor Who and Monty Python. In 1976 he published the revolutionary booklet *The Natural Society*, laying the early groundwork for his work.

In 1984 he and a few others started the magazine *Green Anarchist*, and he would be a part of this magazine until coming into conflict with some of the other editors in the early '90s. The 'official' reason for the split is because of an article Richard wrote during the Gulf War that was, for whatever reason(s), interpreted as being reactionary or whatnot; according to Richard and others around him, the real reason was that the other editors wished to move the magazine further to the Left, whereas Richard wished to remain outside of the Left-Right Paradigm.

Thus, in 1991 Richard Hunt left *Green Anarchist* and started *Alternative Green*; a new magazine with an aptly-suited subtitle, "Green Anarchism for the Politically Incorrect." Also starting in the mid-to-late '90s Richard came into contact with both Troy Southgate and Wayne Sturgeon. Wayne is the main driving force behind *Albion Awake*, a project of an Anarcho-Christian and Anarcho-Monarchist persuasion. Troy Southgate was the leader of the English Nationalist Movement, a Post-Strasserist Third Position group. [2] Richard would strike up a friendship with both of these men and as a result was declared a 'fascist' by reactionary leftists. He contributed to the English Nationalist Movement's magazines *The Crusader* and *The English Alternative*, and vice versa both Southgate and Sturgeon contributed to *Alternative Green*.

In 1997, Richard reworked many of the ideas set out in *The Natural Society* as well as other booklets into a hardcover book, *To End Poverty: The Starvation of the Periphery by the Core*. In October 2000, Richard Hunt and *Alternative Green* helped set up the first (and sadly only)

"Anarchist Heretics Fair," which included *Alternative Green*, the National Revolutionary Faction, Wayne Sturgeon's *Albion Awake*, the Wessex Regionalists, the Libertarian Alliance, and *Nexus* magazine, among others.

Unfortunately, Richard's health was slowly deteriorating. After a series of strokes editorship of *Alternative Green* temporarily shifted to Troy Southgate and Wayne Sturgeon, and then finally Adrian White, another close friend and contributor. Richard spent his last years in a nursing home, where he passed away On May 2nd, 2012.

They say that you should be the change you wish to see in the world, and Richard Hunt tried to make a difference. While I started out this introduction saying I believe Richard was denied the opportunity to influence the wider Anarchist movement due to the actions of the reactionary left, he for sure had an impact on those around him. He got people to look beyond the Left-Right Paradigm, the very thing the reactionary left tried to prevent. In 2013 Black Front Press (the publishing arm of Troy Southgate's National-Anarchist Movement) published *Another Shade of Green: The Collected Writings of Richard Hunt*. It compiled virtually everything Richard had written besides *To End Poverty*, and I suspect if not for its' length it would've been included as well. The book is unfortunately had a limited run and is out of print.

It is my hope that *Another Shade of Green* either gets republished in the future or becomes available in digital form. Until then, however, Kali Yuga Press vows to not allow Richard Hunt's writings to disappear. I hope that this collection provides an adequate introduction.

Joshua Munro
Kali Yuga Press

[1]Editor's Note: The paragraph was posted, along with other information, on *Heathen Harvest*, along with Richard Hunt's *The Theory of Alternative Green*; the website url is available on the next page.

[2]Editor's Note: The *English Nationalist Movement* later transformed into the *National Revolutionary Faction*, a decentralist-leaning *Third Position* group that would eventually formulate the ideology of *National-Anarchism*. Richard has been claimed as an influence on the *National-Anarchist Movement* on multiple occasions.

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THE NATURAL SOCIETY

A BASIS FOR GREEN ANARCHISM

The Natural Society — *A community of no more than about 500 people, the maximum that one person can know, autonomous, self-sufficient and technologically disinterested. It's not worth the effort.*

A grubby sort of utopia, but the others can't work; capitalism and socialism are both based on the theory of 'Division of Labour' which makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. The wealth of trade and industry does not 'trickle down'. The crops the peasants, the wealth, are eaten or otherwise used up. All that's left to 'trickle down' back to the peasants is soot, sewage, scrap and shoddy.

The wealth of the core is caused, not by trade and industry, but by starvation of the periphery, whose land is used to feed the core.

* * *

The nation-state is not a social contract between the governed and the governors; it is a prison in which the governed are, and always were, forced by laws, born of religion, to obey on pain of violence. How then will society evolve without these constrictions? What is the natural society?

It seems likely that, for a society to live a peaceful, orderly life without laws of Obedience, it should be no larger than about 500 people, which is about the maximum number that one person can know. "There is an architects' rule of thumb to the effect that the capacity of an elementary school should not exceed 500 pupils if the principal is to know all of them by name — and it has been stated that when a group exceeds 500 persons, it requires some form of policing," (J.Pfeiffer).

This figure of about 500 seems to be a natural grouping. "Among the least advanced of the food gatherers, the average size of the tribe is between 300 and 400 persons. In the Andamans the figure was 400 to 450 and Kazywicki calculates the average size of 123 Australian tribes as between 300 and 600 souls," (A.S.Diamond). "The Australian data show an amazing constancy of numbers for the dialectical tribe, statistically approximating 500 persons." (Pfeiffer).

How then would this size of grouping apply today?

An island in the Scillies with about 500 people would have few problems of reorganization or basic subsistence. They would have fish in plenty; they would have sheep for meat and wool; they would have timber for fuel and building. But they might get bored with a diet of lobster and roast lamb, so they would do some extra weaving and exchange their cloth and fish for flour or marmalade or caviar. "A Tonkin peasant was only occupied in his fields for about 125 days a year, a Chinese peasant for 120 and a Korean peasant for 140; the Japanese figures were of the same order. The peasants thus had ample time at their disposal and so would engage in industry and trade." (Gourou).

So, with plenty of time, the islanders might decide to put in a little more work to save for a deep freeze, or a record player or an automated cloth factory. Groups who have tried this sort of life today have found it more work, not less, but this is because the government demands more than half

their income in direct and indirect taxation. They therefore have to work twice as hard. They are also building up an infrastructure, irrigation, water and wind power, farm buildings etc., that a peasant society has been able to do over the long centuries. Nor do they work on a social level because they never take their grandparents.

The left wing usually assumes that small communities will be somewhere to the right of the neo-fascists, but anthropologists don't seem to bear this out; "most of these peoples hold very strongly to the view that wealth should not be too unevenly distributed." (L. Mair) "Over the past 50 years in Thak, there has been a gradual equalization of land holdings towards the five plot level. MacFarlane suggests that the numerous cross-cutting bonds, linking everyone with everyone else, has reduced conflict and maintained a kind of non-competitiveness," (Gellner and Humphrey).

In fact, in a small community wealth is a bit of an embarrassment. "The possession or acquisition of wealth created difficulties for a rich villager. His fellow citizens who consider themselves his equals, and were as often as not related to him, overwhelmed him with requests for grain and money." (Gourou). The rich man is gradually and painlessly relieved of his burden; but only as long as it is an enclosed, inward-looking society with plenty of crosscutting bonds and mutual dependence.

Consider Jeff who farms 200 acres on the island, No one else has got more than two acres. Now Jeff likes to drink with his friends but he can't hop over to other islands every night. If he wants any company but his wife's, he'll have to go down to the local, the only pub. But while he's got 200 acres and everyone else has only got two, although they will be polite, they won't be that friendly, Jeff is on his own until he gets rid of a lot of his land. A person can only hold on to wealth as long as he doesn't have to mix socially with those without wealth, and in a small autonomous community that is impossible.

Of course, the community, like every other animal society, will have a peck order; but it will be of respect and influence, not wealth and obedience. "A chief is a sacred person, without political authority. Indeed the Nuer have no government and their state might be described as an ordered anarchy." (Evans-Pritchard), "The influence of chiefs was uncertain, and no one would acknowledge any authority to his own will. A chief received deference, indeed, but not obedience... No chief could carry his will against a single dissident." (Diamond)

Consider Major General John Weston, retd. When our island decided to go autonomous, to pay no taxes and to get nothing back, the major general, if he stayed, would lose his army pension. He might go back to his London flat, but he might decide to stay. He's got a good sized garden and likes the idea of fending for himself; it takes him back to his young days. He can no longer afford the daily help and when he goes to the pub, It's mild, not double malt whisky. His position in the peck order has taken a jolt, a major general no longer carries much weight. But supposing he had been in the tank corps and had a real interest and knowledge of engines, and could help mend generators, back up the peck order he goes. He drinks mild but he commands respect.

And how would the island, without laws, cope with law and order? The local bobby no longer gets paid by the government, so he has joined a friend on a fishing boat, and is not around when two neighbours come to blows about a fallen fence. Wives run for help and the two are separated, the smaller one with a bloody nose. There is a general feeling that both of them acted childishly, but that the bigger one should not have allowed himself to get into the fight; it is made gently clear that the next time the smaller one would get support. But if the dispute is not settled, friends would persuade them, for the sake of peace, to find someone to arbitrate between them. If they both felt that the Major General would be unbiassed, they might ask him. A leopardskin chief "gave his final decision as an opinion couched in persuasive language and not a judgement delivered with authority. The verdict is only accepted because both parties agree to it." (Evans-Pritchard)

But if the little bloke had been Jeff, the farmer with 200 acres, he would have got no support. "Serves him right." Jeff depends for his protection on the goodwill of the community and he can never have that and 200 acres as well. "Conflict was first of all a matter between individuals, then a concern of the families and finally of the bands. The delinquent person was cautioned, ridiculed, gossiped about and shamed into conformity." (Haviland) The problem of our present society is that families have broken up; grandparents live away from parents who live away from children, so that the family sanction for good behaviour is considerably weakened. The community sanction, in towns, vanished long ago. Our problem of law and order is caused mainly by the disintegration of the small community.

The island could get along without us very well. But what about the mainland? What about the people of Penzance? They would be alright for food as long as they like fish, but they would have to obtain wood and timber. The clay pits are not far away, so they could manufacture pottery and poultices to exchange for the natural resources that they needed. They would settle into exclusive street groups of about 500 people, each with their own factory, and each competing with other street groups. But since manufacturing is harder work than agriculture, there would be a move out of the towns and into the villages. Jeff's two sons and their families would go back to the island. (They had had to leave because the government had taken half the island's income away by taxation and spent it on the mainland, creating employment at the core at the expense of the periphery). The Major General's niece in London would go to stay with him, until the rest of the island considered that enough was enough.

In the more densely populated areas, the land would be worked more intensively and, to the extent that they were not self-sufficient in natural resources, they would go into manufacture. A community might have a steel works or a car factory, or a hospital, or a university.

It might be thought that these smaller factories would be less efficient than the present ones because they would lack the economies of scale; but about the only profitable British steelworks, in Manchester, employs 250 people. A survey (Economica '68) showed that the smaller companies were on the whole, more profitable than the larger. This is probably because the economies of scale are negated by the diseconomies of anonymity.

What about health? Once again we are confronted with a basic misunderstanding of primitive society. They are in fact healthier than we. Of the Bushmen "10% were determined to be over sixty years of age, a proportion which compares favourably to the percentage of elderly in industrial populations." (Lee) "Australia presents us with a spectacle of a continent free from the pathology of which entire classes of disease prevalent in other divisions of the globe were until comparatively recent times, completely absent. Thus the whole class of eruptive fevers, smallpox, scarlet fever and measles, so fatal elsewhere, were unknown. Epidemic cholera, relapsing fever, yellow fever, whooping cough and diphtheria were equally absent, as also was syphilis." (Davidson). Urban man is riddled with disease and spends about £10 a week curing that disease. Primitive man is healthy.

But that doesn't mean to say that our accumulated knowledge would just disappear. There would still be hospitals, medicines, doctors and nurses, run as communities.

It is important (and I recognise that this will stick in the throats of the liberal humanists) for the even distribution of wealth, for a caring society and for the maintenance of order, that the community should be a totally separate geographical and social entity. If there is much social mixing between groups, if people work outside the group, it will weaken the community bond; and primitive societies recognized this by their use of dialect and costume to differentiate themselves from their neighbours. Xenophobia is the key to the communities' success.

If Jeff can go drinking with rich friends outside, if he works outside, he won't depend on the group for friendship, he won't need their help in times of illness; he has no need to conform to their mores

or to give up his 200 acres and the group falls apart into the unstructured society we have today, destroyed by the concept of the Brotherhood of Man.

The Natural Society will not be cultured or liberal or advanced or powerful or hardworking or great; it will be warm and well-fed; it will be peaceful, healthy, lazy and parochial. Perhaps that sort of society is not for you, but unbolt the door for those who want to go through. And there may be quite a number, for there would be no taxation which would double your income; it would mean a small plot of land and it would mean being your own boss. And it would work because it has already worked, all over the world.

* * *

It's a grubby sort of Utopia, perhaps, but there are very good reasons why the more visionary societies won't work. And to understand those reasons we have to look deep into history.

It is now accepted in the anthropological world that primitive man is well-fed, long-living peaceful and happy. Today the !Kung Bushmen "obtain a better than subsistence diet in an average work week of twelve to nineteen hours." (Haviland) The pygmies in the Ituri Forest work still less. Neither of them cultivate for as a Bushman said, "Why should we grow things when there are so many mongongo nuts in the world." If there were a few more mongongo nuts in the Home Countries we'd probably say the same thing.

This disinclination to work has been so widely observed that frustrated planners and economists have given it a jargon name, the 'leisure preference'.

Agriculture started, not because man was suddenly imbued with the Protestant Work Ethic, or conversely because it was less work, but because he was hungry. It started when a population had grown beyond the level which the land could support at a hunter-gatherer economy. There was just not enough game or wild fruit and vegetables. One of the first places to start cultivation, Mesopotamia, had suffered a disastrous change of climate when the rain belt moved north at the end of the Ice Age. In spite of what our educators say, that 'Fertile Crescent' was in fact a desert by 5000 BC., during the 'Thermal Maximum'.

Again, in spite of what our educators tell us, agriculture means more work. More food is produced but the labour input is higher per unit of food. The hunter-gatherers don't cultivate because, intelligently, they know it means more work.

The first form of cultivation, in forested areas, is known as 'cut and burn', where a small area is cut down and burnt, cultivated for a few years, then left to grow wild again to recoup its fertility and a new area is cleared. But as the population increases, all the forest gradually *has* to be cut down and subsistence agriculture *has* to replace 'cut and burn' and it means more work. "Even after 'cut and burn' has been abandoned, when the work admittedly becomes more laborious, most cultivators in Africa are still only occupied for a fraction of what we would regard as a normal working year; two-four hours a day on average." (Clark)

Whereas hunter-gatherers move round their territory as certain trees come into fruit and certain animals move their annual way, the cultivators in order to protect both their growing and stored food, are *forced* to stay put. This has certain advantages. They can build more comfortable dwellings, they can use pottery utensils which would have been too heavy to carry around. But these advantages are only side effects of a deteriorating situation forced on them by their growing numbers.

Thus the first important development of progress has been totally misunderstood by everyone, including the economists. Instead of agriculture being the invention of a creative species which brought increasing leisure, we find that it is caused by a scarcity of resources brought on by a growing population and that it means harder work.

When early American colonists first arrived in the almost uninhabited fertile lands of the eastern seaboard, they brought with them the relatively sophisticated techniques of European agriculture. But with all the virgin land available, there was no need for their old intensive methods and they quickly reverted to 'cut and burn' because it was less work. Technologically they regressed.

When a tribe in Java was driven off their cultivated land into the jungle by the Dutch, they forgot their agriculture and reverted to hunter-gathering. They did not find the comforts derived from agriculture worth the extra work. They regressed and they indicate an unexpected motive of human behaviour. Like every other particle and organism in Nature, man obeys the Law of Least Work.

Do't try to understand the contorted motivations of mountaineer, artist or industrialist. Just ask yourself how hard you would work if you were warm and well fed and all your friends and family were outside in the sun. How bored with leisure would you have to get to go and work on a factory production line? Many people say they enjoy their work. What they mean is that they enjoy the company of their colleagues, they enjoy the competition of business or they enjoy the exercise of authority. It is not the work itself that they enjoy.

So if we find man working hard, instead of praising him for his industry, we must ask what are the adverse conditions which have forced him into this undesirable situation.

Why, for example, did man start making cloth?

As the population grows, all the cultivatable land has to be used. But as the forest is reduced, so is the amount of game it can support; fur and leather become scarce. In order to keep warm the people are reduced to weaving, and this is harder work; and though cloth has the advantages of comfort, workability and appearance. These are only side-effects of a shortage of animal skins. Cloth is less durable, more expensive and harder work. Once more, when man is working hard, it is not just for the pleasure of it.

But because the new technology is more expensive, it is first used by the rich as status symbols or armaments. In Scandinavia bronze scythes were in use long after iron had replaced bronze for swords. It was only when bronze became as expensive as iron, because of a shortage of tin, that iron scythes replaced the bronze. Cloth would first have been the mark of wealth until the increasingly expensive leather forced the whole population to wear cloth. We are seldom better off because we have what used to be luxuries. Chicken meat is a contemporary example, since beef has become so expensive.

But leather and food are not the only resources in short supply. As the forests are cut down, timber also becomes short and takes on an exchange value. A farmer with no trees on his land must sell off some of his food for firewood and building timber (fuel and raw materials). Therefore although he is growing more food, he cannot support so many people actually on the farm. The poorest, forced off the farm, have to make things which will persuade the farmer to exchange for food. He will only do this if they put more labour into the artifact than he would do himself. Specialization is harder work and it is caused by poverty, not leisure. "Certain orthodox views of evolution are better turned around; the amount of work per capita *increases* in proportion to technological advance and the amount of leisure decreases." (Sahlins)

The blacksmith in myth is often lame, such as Hephaistos, Vulcan or Wayland Smith. In less advanced societies the smiths are of the lowest castes or classes. In Baluchistan "they lived in their own segregated camps and were employed by the company in their traditional menial capacity of sweepers and blacksmiths." In more general terms mythology bears out this analysis in another way. It nearly always describes a golden age that was in the past.

To exchange his food the farmer must go to market. Roads and bridges *have* to be built; carts with wheels *have* to be constructed; more efficient tools have to be made and all this extra work has to be

included in the cost of the food. The more intensive agriculture becomes, the more work is involved: “the need to support a larger population from a given area of land is going to call for an *increased* input of labour per unit of food produced — particularly when we take into account the labour which will have to be used for private investment in the form of improvements in farms and public investment in means of transport, irrigation, etc.” (C. Clark)

* * *

When a farmer grows a surplus of food, he has created wealth; but kept too long the food goes bad so it is convenient to exchange it for cattle which live longer, give milk and can be exchanged back for food. Cattle, besides being food themselves, are a store of value for more perishable foods. At this point there is no wealth other than natural resources.

Now, supposing an artisan needs food and makes a plough and exchanges it with the farmer for food. This he eats. The farmer now has a plough worth, say, a bushel of corn. But it is a diminishing store of value. The plough deteriorates and each year is worth less food. By the end of its life, say, twenty years, how much wealth has been created? If the plough has contributed to producing more food, then wealth, food, has been created. But the plough itself has vanished; it is not wealth. Work does not create wealth; it just moves it around a bit, in this case, food from farmer to artisan.

If a potter also needed food, and the farmer’s surplus was limited, the potter and the plowright would have to share that surplus. All the artifacts are only worth the available agricultural surplus (and fuel and raw materials). If you double the artifacts you halve their value. Wealth is increased, not by the manufacture of artifacts, but by an increase in the supply of natural resources. At this point there is still no wealth other than natural resources.

Now supposing a man brings in a nugget of gold. The farmer reckons it is pretty and doesn’t tarnish. He reckons he could always exchange it for a bushel of corn. But if there is no corn, it has no value. If he exchanged it for a plough, the plough is still only a diminishing store of value for natural resources. The import of gold has created no wealth. But if, in a period of food shortage, the potter and the plowright and the gold trader all wanted food, the available food surplus would be divided into three. That is to say, a unit of currency will reduce the value of an artifact. All the artifacts plus the gold are now worth the farm surplus.

The value of surplus natural resources equals the value of all the artifacts on the market plus all the currency plus all the stores of value plus all the credit.

Adam Smith said, wrongly, “Consumption is the sole end and purpose of production.” It is not. Acquisition of natural resources is the sole end and purpose of production. But every economist since Smith has made Smith’s mistake, and so built the edifice of modern economics on a fundamentally false premise. No wonder economists are in a pickle.

If bad weather produces a low crop the farmer will not be able to buy the artisans’ products; There will be unemployment. If the forester has a fire, he will not be able to exchange his timber for artifacts. There will be unemployment.

The amount of surplus natural resources determines the amount of available employment.

If the level of employment is determined by resource production, and if a farmer decides to spend his surplus on a plough share from Canada rather than clothes from Hong Kong, then employment in one place can only be at the expense of employment in another. Employment in London must be at the expense of employment in the Scottish Highlands or Mozambique.

* * *

Among the primitive hunter-gatherer, groups number about 25 people. When the population density increases, and they are forced to cultivate, they coalesce into groups of about 500, the maximum number of people that one person can know; and they use dialect and costume as a means of identification to the tribe; and a means of excluding outsiders.

In a natural economy, as its numbers grew above the optimum 500, it would split into two because of increasing dissention, each cultivating its own half of the territory more and more intensively; each, to the extent that it needed to import raw materials, manufacturing one product, jealous of its knowledge and techniques. This is to a certain extent what happened in South East Asia. The group would need no chiefs or rules or policing: "when a group exceeds 500 persons it needs sole form of policing," (Pfeiffer). It would have a natural peck order, but those at the top could not demand obedience of the others. "The chief has no institutionalized authority and little disciplinary power." (Haviland). "The chieftain is usually spokesman of his group and master of its ceremonies with otherwise little influence, few functions and no privileges. One word from him and everyone, does as he pleases." (M. Sahlins). "There is no centre of authority in the village and moreover it is customary to avoid public responsibility... for fear of exciting jealousy." (M. Douglas)

But, particularly in Europe, the natural economy became distorted by the priests.

The seeds of this distortion go right back to the most primitive societies though religion was, at this stage, far less significant and demanding than we had been lead to believe. The Andaman Islanders fear their god, indeed; but also take great delight in cheating him by breaking his rules in certain circumstances where they believe that he can't see. His rules came from witch doctors; "long established customs may be altered overnight as a result of a revelation by some seer, only to have the new customs, overthrown themselves in the course of time by the next revelation." (L. Cipriani)

But this less than wholehearted obedience to the laws of the god as handed down by a seer was the unlikely means whereby the elite grew to power. In a small group the seer was always a prophet in his own land; he was Fred Smith, he had warts and B.O. and wasn't amazingly successful with women; he obviously had the 'power', but he was equally obviously still only a man. It had never been possible for him to demand obedience of the rest of the tribe. But now, with the growth of religion, the situation changes and man makes a momentous departure from the Natural Society. It was now possible for the group to grow beyond the size of 500 and still be an ordered society, but this depended on the acceptance by the population of a god, of his prophet and of his laws. Without that acceptance order could not be maintained in an anonymous society.

The behaviour of the Eskimos shows that the development of religion is not a progress in thought but an accommodation to more densely populated living in a more anonymous grouping: "the people have two ways of grouping themselves, and to those two ways correspond two judicial systems, two moral systems, two sorts of domestic economy and of religious life. To a real community of ideas and interests in the dense agglomeration of the winter, are opposed an isolation, a social atomization and an extreme moral and religious poverty in the dispersal of the summer." (Maus)

But acceptance of a religious fiat brought far more dangers than advantages. The seer or prophet could not demand obedience, and the autocratic chief that we think of as typical, begins to emerge.

Once a society grew larger than 500, when there was a degree of anonymity, some, who didn't know the seer, could be persuaded that he was something special, that he really had the ear of God. And if the people could be persuaded to do what he said, his family and friends were not slow to see the potential. It was in their interests to boost his superman image and it was in his interests to let them do it. The individual. depended on the oligarchy and the oligarchy on the individual.

The prophet, backed by the oligarchy, could now put on the pressure. In Israel, “Moses told the people, ‘You must obey all the commandments of the Lord, your God, following his instructions to the last detail, going the whole way he has laid out for you; only then will you live long and prosperous lives in the land you are to enter and possess.’” (Deuteronomy)

Just in case the carrot wasn’t enough, the stick was applied. “He, (the Lord), issued the following command to Moses: ‘Execute all the tribal leaders of Israel. Hang them up before the Lord in the broad daylight so that his fierce anger will turn away from the people.’ So Moses ordered the judges to execute all who had worshipped Baal.” (Numbers 26)

Having established the principle of Obedience to the Law, the Lord proceeded to take His people to the cleaners, “A tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain or fruit, is the Lord’s and is holy. If anyone wants to buy back this fruit or grain, he must add a fifth to its value. And the Lord owns every tenth animal of your herds and flocks,” etc. (Leviticus 27)

And where did this money go? To the prophet-king, Moses, and his family and friends, who could now buy their henchmen, bureaucrats, policemen, soldiers, priests. etc. to reinforce their position. Thus they were able to live in comfort, without the need to work, by forcing the inhabitants to hand over part of their agricultural produce. They were also able, after a little chat with the Lord, to rewrite the rules when changed circumstances might threaten their income.

Rules protect the rulers, not the ruled.

Very often the elite gained their position by invasion, Moses in Israel, William the Conqueror in England. The invaders took it by the sword but legitimized the theft in connivance with the religions and the theory of “The Divine Right of Kings”. Of course the population can only be conned in this way as long as they believe in the same god. That is why it was so useful to convert all the Africans in the colonies to Christianity. Once a population believes that a ruler is chosen by God, then it is a simple matter to demand Blind Obedience (or obedience to the law; it is the same thing) of the population.

The peasants were now forced to produce a surplus (for a surplus is never produced voluntarily) and that surplus was stored in the palaces, the garrisons, the abbeys, and the castles. Therefore the poorest peasants with the least land were forced to go to where the surplus was kept to earn back by labour the food which had been taken from them. It was the extortion of a food surplus from the land by the Establishment which brought the need to invent writing. The first written clay tablets were lists of agricultural stores in the temple warehouses of Mesopotamia.

Thus towns and cities grew up around these castles and abbeys. They have no independent economic validity. They produce no wealth, for work does not create wealth. They are simply places where the extracted surplus was spent. If a king goes away and the surplus is no longer brought to the city, then the city dies. In 1570 Akbar the Great built a city at Fatehpur Sikri. Fourteen years later he left, taking the surplus with him. So the people had to leave too. All that remained was an elegant skeleton of a beautiful sandstone city. “The private dwellings and the shops decayed and disappeared; the walls, mosque, mint, treasury, canvansary, palaces and other public places remained; no industry has since come near.” (J. Galbraith)

The idea that people only work for others because of poverty is admittedly an unusual concept in our society but more primitive peoples would accept it totally. In Nepal “Each of the larger settlements in the valley has, attached to it, a number of low caste families, either blacksmiths, leather-workers or tailors,” (Gellner and Humphrey). In Polynesia, “in some villages there is a despised community of craftsmen and traders, highly skilled in wood-carving and basketry.” (Diamond). “Where and is cheap, where everyone who so pleases can obtain a piece of land for

himself, not only is labour very dear, as respects the labourers' share of the profits, but the difficulty is to obtain combined labour at any price." (Gibbon Wakefield)

Once an establishment can control a population by laws of obedience, it can adjust the laws to suit itself. In England the local Guild Merchant paid gold to the king and in return received the monopoly of the wholesale trade of the area. It received a charter to hold a market or fair. This means, in reality, that the rest of the countryside is forbidden to have a market, a situation which the population is forced to accept, however unwillingly by the laws of obedience. Farmers have to come to the market town where their selling price is forced down by the monopoly and the buying price for cloth etc. is forced up. (And if you think this sort of monopoly no longer exists, just try selling your glut of lettuces in your local High Street. They'll find a hundred reasons why you can't. It is still illegal to hold a market without permission and two have recently been forbidden here in Reading.) The division of trade into wholesale and retail was the means whereby the monopoly was enforced.

And just as trade was monopolized, so was manufacture. Capitalism was not the product of the accumulation of capital or entrepreneurial flair, but of monopoly enforced by the laws of obedience. Commerce was forbidden to the poor on all but the lowest levels.

Cities are biologically unhealthy; the fertility rate declines as the density increases; growth is mainly by immigration. Cities are medically unhealthy: "the mortality rate for all causes is often well above the national average." (Coates and Rawston) As for crime: "statistical studies have shown that the frequency of crime is several times higher in the cities than in the rural areas," (Glozer)

For the Establishment cities were centres of luxury and leisure and since it was only they who had the leisure to write, it is their judgement of cities which has remained. The inhabitants of Hogarth's Gin Alley would hardly have agreed with Dr. Johnson about London. By removing any surplus, by taxation, from the periphery to the centre, employment is created in the city at the expense of employment at the periphery. This is the basic reason for the flight to the cities. But the economists don't know that.

* * *

Once a nation has outgrown its own food and resources we reach the final stage of economic growth. There are two methods of importing, barter and theft.

Athens used the first. In order to get grain she had to persuade the Black Sea tribes to sell their corn to her. In return she had to produce an artifact that was cheaper than the indigenous product. She had to destroy the indigenous pottery industry causing unemployment. Were these lands owner-occupied, the farmers would have sold any occasional surplus. But since the establishments owned the land, they were able to sell off the food in return for gold or the status baubles of civilization to the detriment of the farm workers who now had to work much harder producing food for both themselves and Athens and they had to pay more for their corn being in direct competition with the Athenians. It was therefore in Athens' interest to support the authority of the local establishment against the local peasantry, (as it was in our interests to support the Shah of Iran).

Rome manufactured nothing. She sent her armies into the wheat producing countries and I 'taxed' them. This theft method does not need the support of the local elite as Boadicea found out. When the Roman population declined in the third century. Rome had no further need for the extensive wheat lands. The Roman Empire declined and fell. And as the population declined, so technology regressed, as we might expect. "The fall of Rome was made manifest in the restoration of a culture designed not for cultivation but for the exploitation of the natural wilderness." (Duby)

Great Britain used a mixture of the two systems. She got herself an empire and she got herself industrialized. By the end of the 18th century her population was rising sharply. The serious timber shortage finally made it necessary to dig for coal on a large scale and to build the vast network of canals, roads and railways needed to transport it, and other necessities, all over Britain. Never before or since has a population worked so hard while this infrastructure was being built. Only when it was finished was child labour outlawed. Once more a shortage of natural resources has produced new techniques which require more labour.

We think we work less hard than peoples of the past because we compare ourselves with those days of the early Industrial Revolution; but that time was exceptional. In ancient Greece, "the effect of the dormant periods meant that for almost half the year there was little to do on the farms." (A. French) In mediaeval Flanders there the woolworkers were amongst the poorest and most hard-working in Europe. "holidays were frequent since all Holy Days were usually appointed obligatory days of rest... Even when only the Apostles' Days were observed, the total annual holiday would be longer than now, particularly since work commonly stopped at the mid-day dinner bell on the vigil (the previous day) or each feast... The ordinances of Arras decreed that there should be no work for four days at Christmas, eight days at Easter and eight at Pentecost." (Camb.Econ.Hist.Eur.)

The peasants, of course worked less hard. "At Thaxsted a virgater had worked 137 days in winter and summer (together) and 38 days the harvest, on the basis of five days a week, four weeks holidays at Christmas, Easter and Whitsun and 61 Saints days in winter and summer and 4 in the harvest season." (N.Kenyon)

Britain had to import food or she would starve. The people we exported to didn't absolutely need our goods, so we had to produce them cotton in Lancashire, cutlery in Sheffield, more cheaply than they could make them themselves. We had to work harder than they did by the input of more labour, including more investment in machinery and more infrastructure. So much for the Protestant Work Ethic and the lazy native.

Also, since no one grows more than needed, the food producing countries had to work harder to produce for both themselves and us. As with Athens, we bartered with the local elite to the detriment in terms of unemployment and higher food prices of the local inhabitants. It is no different today.

About 1870 there began the Great Depression which lasted for twenty years and no economist has explained it. By about 1870 corn began to arrive from America and because it was much cheaper, Britain did not have to produce so many goods to buy the necessary food. The demand for steel slumped etc.etc.

The economists failed to explain it because they thought that consumption and not the acquisition of natural resources was the object of production. But in this case the British population obeyed the law of least effort and worked only as hard as was necessary to stay warm and well fed. The depression was a depression for commerce and industry, but not for the majority of the population. Wages levelled out but prices dropped. They didn't need to work and they didn't! This is a good example of a trade depression which improves the life of the common man. The same was true in the time after the Black Death or the 1930s Depression when the 80% of the population who were employed enjoyed the same lower prices.

In 1868 the Japanese were suddenly allowed by their establishment to trade with the outside world, to import food. For two centuries there had been malnutrition, food shortage and famine. There was no industry for there was no surplus natural resources to buy. At first food imports were paid for in gold until they were able to build up an exporting industry. Their economic miracle was simply the

pent up pressure for food, fuel and raw materials for a dense population.

I have tried to show that progress and economic growth are simply functions of population density, of the need to stay warm and well fed. In the face "of increasing demands by the establishment, dictatorial or democratic. And I have tried to show that it is not a one way street. If the population falls significantly, or if the establishment becomes less rapacious, then technology regresses as during the Dark Ages or after the Black Death, the period known as the golden age of the peasant, or in early colonial America or quite recently in South America.

* * *

But if economic growth and progress are the products of a deteriorating situation, why do we seem to be wealthier than the underdeveloped countries?

Part of the problem lies in the definition of poverty and standard of living. The hunter-gatherer knows no scarcity. Food and heat are abundant. He has been called the first affluent society. The only things a pygmy will take from civilisation are a steel knife, tobacco and the occasional top hat. He has a per capita gross domestic product of nil. He is warm and well fed; he has everything he needs or wants. He has no money. How poor is he?

The inhabitants of India or Mongolia with an income of say £100 survive. In Britain with such an income we would be dead of cold and starvation within two months. The fact is that in these less developed countries much of what is vital for life is free; timber, wild fruit and vegetables, game, etc. In Britain we have to pay for water. In Tokyo they even have to pay for oxygen. So we are not living the good life simply because we have a high gross domestic product, whatever the politicians may say.

I have already shown that work does not create wealth so that the number of factories or artifacts we have is no indication of prosperity. But Britain does possess a great deal of potential wealth. The British Empire taxed its colonies. It creamed off their surplus and removed it to Britain, where it was converted into buildings, furniture, pictures, etc., which still retain their store of value in terms of food, fuel and raw materials. To this extent Britain is wealthier than most.

To what extent do the trappings of an affluent society indicate wealth? 69% of British women work and three quarters of those are of the poorer classes. They can mostly do their shopping only once a week, so that for them a refrigerator is not a luxury but a necessity, and without a car how do you carry a week's supply at shopping; and when you work all day, the same could be said of hoovers or convenience foods etc.

One real measure of affluence is the amount of meat, fruit and vegetables in a diet. Today we rely more and more on cereals and sugar, the cheapest form of protein and calories.

There is another reason why we might appear to be more wealthy than is the case. Since most credit has no backing of natural resources, we have bought cars with paper money that promises to pay in food that hasn't yet been grown or coal that hasn't yet been mined or copper we haven't worked to acquire.

It seems likely that Britain lives as she does by exchanging her store of value built up by the Victorians and by living on tick.

One more aspect of the apparent wealth of a country is that an image that a country gives does not give the whole story. American films have given the impression of great general wealth. As I have already shown a high GDP is no indication. If there is great individual wealth, it can only be at the expense of the general population. The oil tycoons are wealthy because the small farmers and the black urban worker, for instance, were poor. Recently *kwashiorkor*, a disease of malnutrition has

been found in the South-West.

The underdeveloped countries are certainly poor, not because they have a low G.D.P. or because they have few artifacts to act as stores of value, but poor because their natural resources are sold abroad at a profit to the local elite alone, creating high local prices; and poor because the import of manufactured goods causes unemployment. They are poor because we are rich: they are unemployed because we are employed.

* * *

The immediate problem today is considered to be how to get the world out of recession and thus provide employment and create wealth. The solution is considered to be to get the leading economies to reflate (print money) in concert, so giving the consumers more spending power to let them buy more cars and refrigerators from other countries (us) and so create employment and wealth. The economists believe that if a factory has produced a car, it has created wealth which can be spent to create yet more wealth. By their theories the new car can be bought with the car that was built twenty years before and is now gently turning to rust.

The economists believe that if Germany and Japan reflate (print money), their populations will buy our products, giving us employment to make things for them to buy etc. But Germany and Japan are not that stupid. America is. She printed billions and, surprise, surprise, she's got inflation.

The economists believe that work created wealth and they think that the extended boom from 1940 to 1970 proves them right. But it seems much more likely that recent economic growth has been bought on the vast Keynesian extended credit. We bought refrigerators and machines which make refrigerators and paid their producers with paper money promising to pay with non-existent natural resources. We created employment with credit and now the new restrictions on the money supply is slowing down that credit, causing unemployment.

The second major economic problem is considered to be how to make the underdeveloped countries as rich as the developed ones. For us there is a simple and inconvenient answer: to get out, to stop buying food and raw materials from them, which would reduce their prices and their need to work so hard feeding both themselves and us; and to stop selling them our manufactured goods, which would reduce their unemployment.

The result would be that we would starve and have rocketing unemployment. Happily for us there is no immediate chance of this policy being put into practice, since it would hurt their elites too much. The only thing we have to fear is the unlikely chance of land reform whereby the latifundias are divided up into owner occupied plots.

The only real way to help the underdeveloped countries is for us to reduce our population until we are self-sufficient.

* * *

Gradually in every country the Divine Right of Kings became unacceptable and the king's laws of obedience were quietly transferred to an elected oligarchy and are for the moment generally accepted by the population, even though the underlying power to demand obedience had vanished since few governments today claim that they are divinely inspired.

But without divine inspiration it is necessary for governments to convince the population that they have access to some higher knowledge than is generally available. This is the reason for the elevation of the expert to sainthood. The expert has replaced the priest, but his feet of clay are becoming increasingly visible.

While they continue to demand Blind Obedience to their own laws, they are aware of its invalidity. At the Trials of Nuremberg the plea by the Nazi leaders that they were only obeying orders was

rejected.

But even if one accepts the legitimacy of the nation-state, its policies cannot work. The assumption of the capitalist societies is that if the captains of industry make fortunes then that money will 'trickle down' to the poor and everyone will become richer. I have shown that since work does not create wealth, and since wealth is only natural resources and therefore finite, one man can only be wealthy by taking wealth from another. Wealth, in theory, can never 'trickle down', and experience over the centuries has proved this in practice. Even the economists are now rejecting the 'trickle down' theory.

Thus capitalism can never produce a more egalitarian society. It can never produce more employment for all since employment is dependent on the supply of natural resources and not on some mythical business confidence.

Socialism and capitalism make the same mistake. They assume that industrialization will increase wealth. But work does not create wealth. It just moves it around a bit. So if they obtain more raw materials, they are only richer because others are poorer. If they increase employment, it is only at the cost of other countries' unemployment. We have hospitals and theatres because poorer countries starve.

In this analysis of progress, I have tried to show that economic growth is the means whereby we obtain natural resources from less densely populated countries in order to avoid being cold and hungry. It is not a measure of wealth; it is harder work. We didn't choose economic growth, we were forced into it. But both capitalism and socialism assume that it is a desirable end in itself. Their economic policies are geared to encouraging something which is in fact produced by the deteriorating circumstances of an increasing population; so that there is no way that they can improve life and increase economic growth at the same time. The two things are contradictory.

But just as inevitable as the economic failure of the present political systems is their failure in the social field. The increasing crime rate is caused, say the right, by the ending of corporal punishment and going soft on the criminal. The left says it is caused by poverty. Both are wrong. It is caused by the ending of the religious sanction and the ending of the community sanction.

We no longer believe in Hell, so that if priests threaten fire and brimstone to make us behave, we are not impressed. But, more important, our grandparents no longer live next door and our uncles no longer live down the street. So if we misbehave, their disapproval has less influence, we are less ashamed.

In a small community where everyone knows everyone else, if Johnny Jones decides to scrimp apples, and if Mrs. Smith sees him, he'll know she will tell his mother. He'd think again. And if Johnny had scrimped and been caught, his father would have been subject to a certain amount of humorous criticism in his local that evening. He'd have gone home and persuaded Johnny against the idea in the future. But in an anonymous society, Mrs. Smith doesn't know Johnny or Johnny's mother, and his father doesn't drink in the local or work with his neighbours. There are no sanctions on Johnny.

Capitalism, by its removal of the surplus from the periphery to the core has broken up the villages and forced the population into anonymous towns. Socialism and the Welfare State is no better. When the state pays an old age pension, for instance, the pensioner no longer relies on the community or his children. The children can go off and the pensioner dies alone. The grandchildren will be brought up without the undemanding affection and approval of the grandparents, aunts and uncles. A child of overstrong parents is now totally alone, forced to be alone by the Welfare State, to grow up neurotic, insecure and delinquent. Of course most children can cope. But it only needs a few delinquents for society to be impossible.

So unless we rebuild the small independent communities, we are heading for total social breakdown and no amount of flogging or redistribution of wealth will avert it.

* * *

It is usually argued that discipline is essential to the efficient running of any organization. A hierarchic, disciplined society depends on a carefully cultivated assumption that it is natural and necessary. I have already shown that it is not particularly natural. Is it necessary?

I suggest that the work done on the ground by the Social Services is carried out efficiently in spite of and not because of the hierarchic structure. Were the managements of the Old Peoples' Homes and the Social Service managements to be struck by indisposition, the staffs would cheerfully carry on. They are responsible, intelligent and concerned. Management in this case is clearly superfluous, so that obedience is similarly superfluous.

Nor is management particularly clever and the higher you go the less particularly clever it is, because the further from the ground that the decision is made, the less chance there is of it being right. It has been said, for instance, that all the major decisions taken by the British governments in the last hundred years have been wrong. And in a tight hierarchic structure, a wrong decision taken at the bottom, challenged, is bound for disciplinary reasons to be supported all the way to the top. In a recent case of two London Transport computer operators, they were disciplined for painting a rest room without permission. It was not the painting that was in question but the discipline. The cases were dealt with through all the stages of our agreed disciplinary machinery in which the grounds were that the men disobeyed instructions. Notice that whether it was a good or bad thing to paint the room was not considered relevant. Obedience was the only issue and the decision, right or wrong, was bound, for disciplinary reasons, to be supported right to the top. The whole 'disciplinary machinery' is a clever and totally fraudulent charade. The rules are fixed to allow the individual no chance. Carefully unstated, but proved in the courts, is the implicit demand for blind obedience in every contract of employment.

Establishments maintain the fiction that any decision can be questioned on appeal to a higher authority, but even when this actually happens, they will still demand blind obedience to the decision of the highest authority.

Thus obedience is not for efficiency but for the maintenance of the power of the establishment. For instance, when we colonized Africa, it was impossible to assert our authority, (to remove the surplus by taxation) without a chief, therefore one had to be imposed to act as a hostage for the obedience of each village. "When chiefs proved recalcitrant or nonexistent, they were replaced or installed by colonial nominees," (B. Davidson) As a carrot the chief was given extra privileges and cash, *a higher rate of pay*. It was in the colonizers' interests to have a chief; it was in the chiefs' interest; it was in no one else's.

The only purpose of discipline and obedience is to maintain the power of the elite.

We have been conditioned for hundreds of years to believe that we are too incompetent, too stupid, to be responsible for our own lives, that we must be led, that we must have leaders. Are you that incompetent? Are you that stupid? And if you do not think you are, who are you to say that everyone else is? While everyone will angrily reject the idea that they themselves are totally inadequate, they will happily say that everyone else needs to be told exactly what to do, that they need leaders. Grow up! Take charge of your own lives and let others take charge of theirs; you're old enough now to do without leaders.

After forty years of government ineptitude, hasn't it begun to dawn on you that your leaders are only ordinary mortals and know no better than you how to run your life. Haven't you realized yet that economists simply don't understand the economy, that psychologists don't understand human

nature, that educational experts know nothing about teaching children. How much chaos will you accept before you tell them to flutter off.

Those who are scared to do without leaders are the cause of our problems. So we are stuck with politicians who lead us with charismatic bravura from one crisis to the next. They are not gods; their experts are not infallible. How many more ridiculous laws must they pass before we tell them to crawl back under their stones? If the primitive societies can do without leaders why can't we?

* * *

Civilization has reached a watershed. For the first time in thousands of years in mankind's history, the peoples are beginning to question the existence of the gods and the right of others to demand blind obedience, the power to order their lives. Slowly and powerfully, in Eritrea, in Brittany, in Scotland, in the neighbourhood associations of America. in the islands of the Caribbean, smaller groups are eroding the power of the Leviathans. Since the middle of the century the average size of the state has been diminishing. But the process is slow; the rulers are reluctant to abdicate power.

Devolution is inevitable, but the process could be traumatic or it could be painless, If the present policies of the rulers are continued much longer, there will be social and economic breakdown and millions will suffer and die. The Natural Society will be achieved but the process will be agonising.

If devolution is urged forward with all deliberate speed the crash might be avoided; but there is not too much time. At a minimum vote for any candidate that offers more devolution, who is against the Common Market, for instance, whatever his other idiot policies. But lest events overtake this slow process, get out, find others, and together put forward ideas to strengthen your community, to resist governmental, bureaucratic interference. You must persuade others that the problems of society lie, not with the right or with the left but with the whole centralized system.

But if you are going to form a group, be careful not to elect a committee. Don't abdicate power to an inner clique; and no rules! Don't let the majority tyrannize over the minority. Action must be by consensus.

If we honestly want peace and laughter, there is no alternative but the Natural Society. It will be unsophisticated, but you cannot get rid of poverty, or war, or unhappiness without losing your discos and your symphony concerts. They are all offspring of the same tyranny, obedience to the rulers.

Rules protect the rulers, not the ruled. Those words will ring across the world and change that world. No longer will the establishments be able to con the peoples out of their possessions, to tyrannize over them with their theories and philosophies for their days in the sun are almost over, and their hypocritical, predatory world will be replaced by a more gentle, honest, peaceful, Natural Society.

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VILLAGES CAN SOLVE OUR SOCIAL PROBLEMS

A GREEN ALTERNATIVE TO TECHNOLOGY

His curriculum vitae is one of principled radicalism. Former Editor of GREEN ANARCHIST, present Editor of ALTERNATIVE GREEN and ground-breaking author of TO END POVERTY: THE STARVATION OF THE PERIPHERY BY THE CORE, there is little doubt that RICHARD HUNT is one of the most stimulating and original thinkers of the last decade.[1]



THE welfare state isn't working. We are approaching social breakdown. Young people are running out of control. Our people are living out their last years totally alone and vulnerable. Orphanages are now known to be honey pots to paedophiles. Old peoples' homes, I know from personal experience, can be just as cruel. The incompetent, the inadequate and the just plain mad are thrown onto the streets with occasional help from burnt-out carers. We know you can't buy love. Well, you can't buy care either.

It is becoming clear that the State can never provide the care that it claims. Because of its high taxation, labour costs are high. In a welfare state caring has to be paid for. The State can never afford to pay for the care that the extended family used to provide, free.

The breakdown of the extended family and now the nuclear family means that control of the young has disappeared. Bad behaviour used to reflect on the whole extended family, so there was considerable pressure on children to behave. Grandparents would wield the strongest but tolerant influence, particularly grandmothers. It is the female in rearing the children who sets the standards of behaviour. And the oldest have the most moral authority. 'Matriarch' is the wrong term, meaning a woman who rules. It is not power she has but influence.

The extended family is able to ease marital difficulties. If a man is beating his wife, the wife's father and brothers will come steaming down and put heavy pressure on him to stop. Nowadays fathers and brothers are miles away. If a child is being raised by inadequate parents, it will be gently moved up the road to aunts, cousins or grandparents, not into 'care'.

The extended family has vanished because of Mobility of Labour. Once the crops were sold out of the village, they were no longer able to provide jobs within the village. Workers with no land had to move to the cities where the crops had been taken to (because of the higher cost of living and therefore higher wages, the core can always out-bid the villages for the crops, as we out-bid the Third World for its crops).

Another cause of the breakdown of the extended family is the State itself. In attempting to provide welfare it undermines the influence of the extended family. Family pressure can sometimes be irksome. Knowing that the State will provide anonymous welfare, pensions etc., the individualist may opt for State care, but this weakens family pressure to behave.

To rebuild a caring society we have to rebuild the extended family. But this is not possible in towns and cities. Continual rebuilding caused by growing population and changing land values, destroys any geographical concentration of families. A famous study of London's Bethnal Green showed how the last groups of extended families were dispersed by re-housing.

So it is only the villages where we can re-build the extended families and a caring society. To do this we have to cut the population, cut taxation, cut the size of the political unit and cut free trade.

The first thing to do is to provide jobs in villages, to replace machinery with people on the farms. This means reducing labour costs, the reason the machines replaced the people. High labour costs are caused by high taxation. So to provide jobs in the villages we have to cut the taxation on trade and traders, indirect taxation, which will directly reduce the cost of living (the taxes on trade are passed directly on to the consumer, an extra penny on a pint) so wages can be reduced, maintaining buying power, so that people can be cheaper to hire than expensive machines.

Cutting the cost of living will enable craft-based industries like pottery and weaving to return to the villages because the craftsmen will not have to make such a large turnover to make a living.

Ultimately, what provides jobs is the food grown in the villages. So the less food sold out of the village the more jobs. When the cost of living has gone down, the smallholder would be able to make a living selling his produce locally.

On the periphery in the hills of Scotland, Wales and northern England, where they can be self-sufficient because of their low population, they can use taxes on imported goods from the core to protect their local craftsmen, or less formally use community pressure not to buy imported goods to protect their own family's craftsmen.

To bring final control back to the village we have to progressively break up the political unit, first to England, Ulster, Scotland and Wales, then to the regions with their own coinage and Final Appeal, then the counties, the towns and finally autonomous, self-sufficient armed villages.

But this can only be achieved when we've cut the population. And when we've cut the population sufficiently no one will need jobs. We'll all have our own plot of land.

And when we've got our own plot of land there'll be no television because there will be no one prepared to work in a television factory taking orders from a foreman, when we can be our own boss on our own land. There'll be no computers or telephones, not because we won't want them, but because we won't be able to get the buggers into factories to make them. If we want to communicate, it's back to fire signals.

The loss of technology is the price we pay for a just and caring society.

[1]Editor's Note: The original header was not in italic but was present when the article was first published online.

THE THEORY OF ALTERNATIVE GREEN

The Causes of Poverty

Hunter-gatherer societies are not poor. They have been called the ‘original affluent society’. Food and fuel is abundant and free, with never a need to store or cultivate. So poverty is not caused by lack of development or lack of knowledge. Hunter-gatherers do not trade or barter. When they kill game, they share it with the rest of the group; they do not exchange it. Exchange is considered highly anti-social. Far from being of a trucking disposition, primitive man was strongly averse to acts of barter. (Polanyi. Trade and Market in Early Empires. 1971) So there’s nothing natural about trade. Sometimes a charismatic, often paranoid figure arises, who, with his companions, like a street-gang today, terrorises the district into submission, forcing the people to hand over their food to feed him, his companions and their henchmen. But these tyrants die and without his ruthless charisma his companions lose their power. There’s nothing we can do about this sort of tyrant. But later their power was transmitted to others, and that we can do something about. When he dies his companions lose their goodies, so they pretend that the tyrant had been descended from the gods and that therefore his son was also semi-divine and so should inherit the kingship. That way the companions keep their goodies. This can only happen when a belief in a god or gods already exists. What had started out as a harmless, pretty explanation of the natural world becomes a tool for the companions of the tyrant. Moses goes up the mountain, has a chat with God and comes back down saying, “God says that 10% of all you own is holy and is the Lord’s and you pay it over every year to the Chief Priest (who just happens to be my brother.)” Religion demands obedience to ‘God’s’ laws and the priests say that ‘God’s’ laws say “pay your taxes“. It was those taxes that created the fabulous wealth of Solomon and his companions; and the poverty of everyone else. It is religion and government which causes poverty. If someone naively invents one of these silly gods, someone else will come along and exploit it.

The Enforced Surplus

In Mesopotamia the kings traded with other kings for luxury articles. There was no trade in the villages. Babylonia possessed neither market places nor a functioning market system. (Polanyi. Trade and Market in Early Empires. 1971)

The kings took what food and materials they wanted by force and religious taxation. Villages, contrary to conventional economic wisdom, did not exchange their food for the manufactured goods produced by the artisans of the cities, who only produced for the rich. The villages were proudly self-sufficient. They produced no more than was necessary including storage against the seven lean years. They never produce a surplus. Like every other organism in nature, they obey the law of Least Effort This implies that in a future free society the villages will not feed the cities. So it is crucial to validate the law of Least Effort. Two-car garages, climbing Mount Everest and competitive games don’t sound like Least Effort.

The Peck Order

When a group of birds are competing round a carcass, it saves a lot of fighting if each remembers

which is stronger than another. So each stronger bird reminds the next weaker by the occasional peck. Instead of having to fight every time, the peck is enough. Keeping the peace with Least Effort. This behaviour pattern was first noticed amongst domestic chickens so was called the pecking order, or peck order or dominance hierarchy or rank order. In a pair bonding species the female takes the status of the male. The rank order is constantly changing as the young grow strong and the strong grow old. Among chimpanzees: The young male must challenge the females of his community, one by one, and then, when all have been dominated, he must begin to work his way into the dominance hierarchy of the adult males. (J. Goodall. *Through a Window*. 1990) But it's not 'red in tooth and claw'; one of the functions of an alpha male is to support the weaker ones, who are not a threat to him, and to preserve the peace generally. The object of the peck order is to keep the peace with Least Effort. Many species are able to avoid fighting altogether by deciding the peck order with ritualised methods. Bower birds attract their mates, not by fighting, but by competing to decorate their nests with objects attractive to the females. This behaviour is called 'conventional means to conventional goals.' The human species also uses this system. To find our place in the peck order we agree to compete to get a ball between two posts (conventional goal) by only using our feet (conventional means). Or we compete by what sort of picture we have on our walls; at the bottom a flower print from Woolworths, then a reproduction of an eighteenth-century flower print, then an amateur watercolour, professional watercolour, oil painting, etc. until we reach the Van Gogh irises costing millions. By being able to afford it – whatever it looks like – he has reached the top of that peck order. In these cases the painting is the conventional goal, money the conventional means. Your make of car states your rank order without having to beat your neighbour over the head every morning. Or we compete by how many books we have on our shelves. So keeping up with the Joneses is very important – keeping the peace by Least Effort. Thus the two-car garage, climbing Mount Everest or competitive games are all consonant with Least Effort. All hunter-gatherer societies have peck orders. They sometimes even have chiefs in some of the larger groups. These command respect and influence, but not obedience. One word from the chief and everyone does as they please. (Marshall D. Sahlins. *Tribalism*. 1968) The problem is not hierarchy. There will always be hierarchy (peck order). The problem is obedience to hierarchy. It is obedience, not hierarchy, that causes poverty and oppression. Because it undermines the possibility of total socialist equality, sociology and psychology for the last forty years have been fighting rear-guard action against this concept, like the priests fought Galileo. But with the death of Socialism the concept of peck order is now incorporated into both sociology and psychology. Without the concept of the peck order this economic analysis could not be validated. It could not show that the human species obeys the law of Least Effort and that therefore in a free society the villages would not feed the cities.

Trade

Conventional economics says that trade creates wealth. This is not true; it simply moves it from the poor to the rich. With the invention of money the kings found that by taxing their traders who fed the urban artisans etc. and who would pass the tax straight on to these consumers, the kings could increase their income considerably without their subjects noticing that they were paying the hidden tax. So it was in the king's interest to increase trade to increase his power. Therefore he built the King's Highway, the bridges and the ports which all drain the raw materials from the periphery to the core. Cash is also used to force the peasant to feed the city. He is taxed in cash so he has to grow extra crops to sell in the city, not for urban artefacts, but for cash to hand back as taxes. He benefits in no way. That is why the villages feed the cities and the Third World feeds us, while they starve. A city is parasitic on its food-producing hinterland periphery. The more land it controls, the bigger the city. Sometimes, like Athens, it runs out of land and poverty forces it to make a living by the profits from trade. To do this it has to support client kings who supply their timber, wheat and wool. Because the cost of living at the core is always more expensive – water wood and food have to be bought, sewers built – than on the periphery, labour costs are always higher and therefore labour-

saving machinery is more necessary and so technology is always more advanced at the core. The governments can therefore keep the client kings in power with their technologically more advanced weapons. These client kings are bribed to exploit their own people by selling their crops, as is happening in the Third World today. The core cannot eat without the periphery starving. Poland starved to feed medieval Europe. As Europe grew more populated, the food-producing and starving periphery expanded into the Balkans and Russia then to the slave plantations of the Americas. Today the starvation has expanded into the Third World. Athens is a good example of a city driven by lack of land into trade. Others are Tyre, Venice, Singapore and Hong Kong. But the main reason for trade is to increase the government's power by the hidden indirect taxes. So trade does not create wealth. It removes the raw materials from the periphery to the core, and only the core and the rich on the periphery benefit. If the people had a choice there would be no trade.

Industry

Specialisation did not start because man was able to produce a surplus but because of poverty. When a man does not have enough land he is forced to specialise in weaving, or pottery, or basket-making. Such people are looked down on. In Polynesia: in some villages there is a despised community of craftsmen and traders, highly skilled in wood-carving and basketry. (A. S. Diamond. The Evolution of Law and Order. 1973) Specialisation means more work, not less. The hunter-gatherers work 1-3 hours a day, cultivators in Africa about 4 hours. Athenian farmers worked only half the year, there was little to do in the winter. In the Middle Ages they were beginning to work harder, but not too much: At Thaxted a virgator had worked 137 days in winter and summer (together) and 38 during the harvest on the basis of a five day week, four weeks holiday at Christmas, Easter and Whitsun and 61 saints days. (N. Kenyon. Economic History Review. 1934) Today, taking travelling time and overtime into account, we work about as hard as the Victorians. But three-quarters of the female population now do paid work as well. So altogether we're working half as hard again. Certain orthodox views are better turned around; the amount of work per capita increases in proportion to technological advance and the amount of leisure decreases. (Marshall D. Sahlins. Tribalism. 1968) The effect of industrialism at the core is to de-industrialise the periphery. In the nineteenth century British cheap manufactured goods destroyed the thriving Indian weaving industry. If India is able to re-industrialise now it is only at the expense of the further periphery in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal etc., and also British industry. It is the loss of the land, not population growth, which is the cause of industry. In Indonesia, until recently just as high a density of population produced not industry but a very intensive, self-sufficient agriculture.

Division of Labour

The economic theory which justifies driving the population off the land and into the factories was worked out by Adam Smith. His theory of Division of Labour says that if in a business each person specialises in what he is best at, then the firm is more successful. Correct. It then says that therefore all the members of that firm are better paid. Incorrect. The wages of the workers are determined, not by the success of the firm, but by hungrier unemployed people at the factory gate, prepared to work for less. This theory was expanded by Ricardo to justify the destruction of periphery industry by international trade. The theory now says that if two countries specialise in what each is best at (even if one can produce everything more cheaply), more is produced overall. Correct. The theory then says that the workers in both countries are therefore better paid. Incorrect. The wages of the Third World today prove that the wage levels are determined, not by the success of the country's economy, but the starving prepared to work for less.

A Sprint Through History

Rome did not need to industrialise because it obtained its raw materials by force and taxation from land within its own jurisdiction. As with the Chinese empire the state derived its income by direct

taxation on land rather than indirect taxation on trade, so for both these reasons it didn't need to trade. Nor were either of them threatened by technologically superior neighbours so did not need to invest in military research and development. China even forbade further research into gunpowder. When the Roman Empire declined, only the western half fell; the eastern half survived for another thousand years. The fall was caused by the transfer of taxes when the emperor moved from Rome to Constantinople. Constantinople could afford to defend itself; Rome could not. With the fall came a strong decline in population and regression of technology. In some areas the potters wheel vanished and so did the woodworker's plane. After Rome's collapse began the growth of technology which culminated in our present civilisation. It was caused by the Church's extravagant building programme, which had to be paid for by higher agricultural output and reduced labour costs. They were forced to increase the use of the water mill (sixth century), the heavy plough (seventh century), the three-field system (eighth century) and the horse shoe and collar (ninth century). Until the fourteenth century the Church with their agriculture, building, hydraulics and metallurgy led the technological way. And from where the monasteries were most concentrated, northern Italy, northern France and Flanders, developed the leading industrial centres which had grown from servicing the monasteries. Europe at the time was broken up into many warring cities and states, deriving much of its income from taxation on trade. Gradually the cities without a large tax base to afford the weapons, were incorporated into the larger states until there were three major players: Holland, France and Britain. The British parliament would not vote sufficient taxation to Charles I to build the necessary army and navy, but Cromwell got the money to be raised by indirect taxation. This continued for a century until Britain ruled the waves at the cost of the highest indirect taxation in Europe and therefore the highest cost of living. This meant high wages and our goods were being priced out of the European market. Britain was forced to cut labour costs by industrialising, forced by the indirect taxation. Indirect taxation causes economic growth. Germany, frightened of its neighbour's technological military superiority and slaughtered by the cheap British imported goods, was then forced to industrialise. And so was everyone else. The people who paid the cost of this industrialisation were the Third World who's land grows crops for us instead of food for themselves.

Checklist for Economic Growth

So if the Tories or Labour want to increase economic growth, it's very simple. You make sure the population has no land and can be forced into the factories. You hit them with indirect taxes to increase the cost of living wages and labour costs and make labour-saving technology necessary. You need a high population to provide enough consumers to buy the output of the factories and make the economies of scale profitable. You need threatening neighbours to encourage high military expenditure which will keep your client governments in power to force their people to supply the raw materials. So the causes of poverty are the loss of the land, government taxation, trade and industry. Religion caused the kings which caused taxation which caused trade and industry which caused poverty.

The Green Party

This analysis means that Green Party policies, by increasing indirect taxes, would cause more, not less economic growth. They themselves have costed their policies at £8.4 billion more than present government expenditure, which would increase the power and control of government. They plan to raise this extra money by increasing indirect taxes. This would increase the cost of living and therefore wages and therefore the need for labour-saving machinery which would cause unemployment and more economic growth, the unemployment being mostly in the Third World. It would also mean that small businesses would fail because they could not make the extra money to cover the increased cost of living. All labour-intensive activities like repairing, recycling and all the caring activities would become uneconomic. The small communities would be made even weaker,

making even fewer decisions, and big would become beautiful.

A Village Society

Alternative Green advocates a return to autonomous, self-sufficient villages of around 500 people. 500 is about the largest number of people that one person can know. Above that number social disruption increases because of anonymity. When a group exceeds 500 persons, it requires some form of policing. (J. Pfeiffer. *The Emergence of Man*. 1969)

Kinship

Disputes in societies of this size are settled not between individuals but between families . In extreme cases such as murder all the relations of a murderer are expected to contribute to the 'blood price' paid to all the victim's family. A lot of cows change hands and the murderer's family is very angry for having lost their cattle. So there is strong family pressure to make individuals behave. It is the kinship tie which is the crucial element in keeping the peace; and for the weaker members of the group a strong source of protection. For a wife it is a useful insurance to have a father and brothers living down the street. Kinship helps create equality, too. Amongst the Gurkhas: Over the past 50 years in Thak there has been a gradual equalisation of land holdings towards the five-plot level. Macfarlane suggests that the numerous cross-cutting bonds, linking every with everyone else, has reduced conflict and maintained a kind of non-competitiveness. (Gellner and Humphrey. *New Society*. 17.8.78.) The importance of kinship as the only factor in creating a community has been made clear by the Bethnal Green studies. In the 1940s and 1950s there was much concern over the break-up of the community and many studies were made to find what held communities together. In Bethnal Green, famous for the last surviving urban community, in four different studies the only factor they could find was kinship to the extent that all the studies were excluded from Community Studies (C. Bell / H. Newby. 1971) on the specific grounds that they only mentioned kinship. The change-over from our kin-dispersed society to kin-based communities would probably be achieved by unrelated families first forming supportive coalitions and then intermarrying to create a kinship group.

Defence

Wars are fought to take the crops. You cannot defend the crops with non-violence. Every village will have to be defendable otherwise the next village will surely encroach and try to extend its boundaries. However friendly they are you can never be sure that one day they won't produce, a Saddam Hussein. It's no big deal. Half the population in the villages today, the farmers, are already armed and they don't go around shooting everyone. In fact it has been said that an armed society is a very polite one.

Technology

As we have seen, towns, cities, technology are all exploitative, so there'll be no place in the villages for technology. You can't knock up a kidney dialysis machine in the garden shed. If you want just a little technology, you are asking for just a little exploitation, Who are you going to exploit? Who are you going to force to spend their lives making screws and nails for you? If they've got their own land, they won't do it voluntarily.

The Oppression of Women

The difficult fact that feminists gloss over is that men are bigger and stronger and can hit harder. The function of the male is to protect the female and that fact must be brought into the equation. For feminists the oppression of women is caused by hierarchy, pornography, sexist language and the up-bringing of children. The oppression is caused, rather, by the dog-eat-dog society where the more

co-operative women lose out to the more competitive men. In a village society people will still be both co-operative and competitive, but there will be no police force or army to enforce laws of land ownership. To get your plot you will have to co-operate with the rest of the village. There will be no money to buy care in your old age or illness. We'll need to co-operate with each other for our own self-interest. Our natural competitiveness will be moderated by our need to co-operate. In our present society the state takes care of the old and the ill; the police enforce the laws of property. The need to co-operate has been destroyed by money, the private ownership of land and the welfare state. So our natural competitiveness is no longer moderated by the need to co-operate and grows into a monster. Hence the dog-eat-dog society. All people have both competitive and co-operative urges. But men grow up, pushed by their hormones, to be more competitive, the women more co-operative. In a dog-eat-dog society the more competitive men win out. The more co-operative women go to the wall. Thus the feminists are wrong to find the cause of their oppression in hierarchy, pornography, sexist language and the upbringing of children. The capitalists will be delighted to excise all unsuitable language, ban-pornography and change the upbringing of children because they know that it will change nothing. They'll put a few token women on the board and have a free hand to employ the rest as factory fodder at the lowest wages in a 'free market', another phrase for the dog-eat-dog society. The feminists will never get rid of hierarchy (peck order). It's what holds social groups together with Least Effort. And it isn't the problem. The problem is not hierarchy but obedience to hierarchy. In village societies there will be a rank order, and in some larger groups even chiefs. But they cannot command obedience. One word from the chief and everyone does as they please. (Marshall D. Sahlins. *Tribalism*. 1968) Without obedience the religions and governments could not enforce their oppression of women, however hierarchic they are. The problem is obedience, not hierarchy. The feminists are quite right to realise that competitiveness has run out of control, but are wrong to think it can be solved by bringing up boy children without toy guns. It hasn't worked. Competitiveness can only be moderated by the need to co-operate. And persuading women to be more assertive is only coping with the dog-eat-dog society, not changing it. Sexist language is another red herring. Words do not influence what we think. They reflect it. So removing sexist language will not reduce the oppression of women. If words changed what we thought, any sort of expression of logical thought becomes impossible because the thought would be changed by the words expressing them. But perhaps the major fault of feminism is that it has nothing to say to poor women. The function of the police is to protect the property of the rich and the middle classes against the poor. The function of the police is to suppress the poor. Poor women know that they will get little protection from the police. So they need to find a strong male, or if not strong, one who looks strong, macho. Feminism is a luxury for the middle classes in a police state. So, the cause of the oppression of women is not hierarchy, pornography, sexist language and the upbringing of children, but the dog-eat-dog society, caused by money, the private ownership of land, the welfare state and obedience.

The Function of The Artist

The place of the artist today is to reinforce the authority of the elite by building their palaces, or office complexes, decorating their walls, making their furniture and status symbols; in a village society that will have no place but artists will still be useful, though not envied. Freud was right to say that art is born out of neurosis. The artist in his unhappiness paints for approval and applause. The community would use his talent. "Write a song for us to sing." "Carve us a totem pole." This relationship is clearly illustrated in the following extract. Andrew was a disturbed child. His drawings revealed a very active fantasy life peopled by some imaginary characters called Poppy, Purple, Tulip, Dandelion and later on Bud who represented his baby brother. These figures had exciting adventures with much aggressive action, and the other children in the nursery school group became interested and began to take the names and act out the parts in character. He was a very

intelligent child and the other children were giving him a great deal of help by their reliance on his intellectual and imaginative stimulation in their play activities. (Joan Cass. *The Significance of Children's Play*. 1971) It is only a small step from Andrew to the bard singing his sagas to the villagers. So they would welcome the bard's imagination but would not envy it. Creativity and self-expression would be exploited but not encouraged. Craftsmanship is a little different to Art. One can foresee houses, clothes, utensils and weapons being decorated as an expression of pride and status, but Art for Art's sake will have no place.

Population

With the decline in economic growth always comes a decline in population. Self-sufficient communities limit their population growth since another baby means less for everyone else.

Economic growth reduces self-sufficient communities and increases the number of families who buy food and are therefore outside the sphere of community pressure to maintain population stability. So a decline in economic growth and an increase in self-sufficient communities would see a decline in population.

The Changeover

There are two approaches, both depending on cutting government power by cutting its life-blood: taxation. The legal way is to elect MPs committed to cutting taxes, first indirect taxes on the poor. As taxation declines, so does the cost of living, making small businesses more successful because they don't need so much turnover. A lower cost of living means lower wages, maintaining buying power, so that repairing and recycling are more economic and tender loving care can replace drugs.

Small communities are made stronger. Small becomes beautiful. Taxes can be cut until there are no taxes and therefore no government. The revolutionary way must start in the Third World where already, because America is broke, the Third World tyrants are receiving less arms 'aid'. So they will lose control of their peripheries and the crops. This, by cutting taxation on trade, will weaken our own governments, who will be unable to control their own peripheries, where no-go areas can be set up. As governments lose more taxes by legal and illegal means and become weaker, the no-go areas of autonomous, self-sufficient villages will spread.

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD HUNT

Richard Hunt is author of To End Poverty: The Starvation of the Periphery By the Core (1998) and Editor of Alternative Green magazine. The following interview first appeared in Issue #6 of The Crusader.[1][2]



Q. By way of an introduction for people who have not yet heard of Richard Hunt, can you give us a brief history of your past political activity, your ideological development and the events that led you to establish Alternative Green?

RH: Having worked out my theory of the causes of poverty, I tried to sell it to the Left via a community newspaper in Reading. And failed. I then joined the Greens and tried to persuade their economic working party. And failed. I tried to interest the (urban) Anarchists. And failed. So I and two others started Green Anarchist, which does now accept our economic analysis; but a difference over strategy developed. The two other (different others) wanted to go further Left for short-term advantage. I wanted to hold the centre-ground between Left and Right for long-term advantage. So I had to leave and start Alternative Green.

Q. You have a specific viewpoint regarding the way in which the present economic system operates, i.e. the exploitation of what you call the periphery by the core. Again, for those who have yet to come into contact with your ideas, can you briefly explain your theory?

RH: ‘Primitive’ societies are not poor. Food and fuel are always available and free. They have been called ‘the original affluent society’. They never store food or grow it. Growing food is harder work, so unintelligent. They obey the *Law of Least Effort* (which is why they won’t feed the cities). Population growth is controlled by the group, otherwise they would have to work harder by growing things to feed the extra mouths. Then, it seems, chiefs or shamen invented religion to persuade, con or force others to produce a surplus and hand it over. “The gods say so”. This happened before settlement. In case they objected the peasants were disarmed (this also meant that the King/State and not the clan now had responsibility for peace and justice because the clan, disarmed, could no longer enforce a decision).

The top people, with food from the peasants, were no longer constrained to keep the population low, the rich had the children. And so they demanded more food from the peasants and created the poverty. Conventional economics says that it is the lack of trade and industry which creates poverty. This is not so. Trade and industry cause further poverty by again transferring the natural resources from the periphery to the core. The periphery peoples do not choose to trade. They share resources. They do not exchange them. Barter or trade is seen as extremely anti-social and, “Far from being of

a trucking disposition, primitive man was strongly averse to acts of barter” [Polanyi, 1977]. So there’s nothing natural about trade. But their periphery rulers force the peasants to produce a surplus which the rulers remove and sell to the core to buy the core’s luxuries and arms. Thus the artisans at the core who make these luxury goods are able to obtain their food. They depend on strong rulers on the periphery. The urban artisans have hardly ever made goods for periphery peoples (rather than their rulers) who are proudly self-sufficient.

Nowadays, the periphery peoples are forced to produce the surplus, not by the sword, but by direct and indirect taxation. They are forced to pay an income tax or poll tax etc., in cash. Their only way to obtain cash is to grow extra crops; cash crops which they exchange for cash, which they then hand over as taxes. After the invention of money rulers found they could increase their income, and therefore their power, by taxing trade. The traders paid the taxes and increased the prices of their goods to pay for it. So the consumers paid the taxes without realising it, as we pay VAT. It was therefore in the ruler’s interests to increase trade to increase their income, and therefore the poverty of everyone else. In the Middle Ages the peasants produced a surplus to feed the priest and the soldiers because it was ‘seemly’. there was no suggestion that their crops were being exchanged for the products of the urban artisans.

In the Age of Enlightenment ‘seemly’ wasn’t good enough. They had to find another excuse for forcing the peasants to feed them. Adam Smith said that entrepreneurs create wealth by trade and industry. this wealth, he says, ‘trickles down’ to the middle classes in return for their services. They consume some of it. the rest ‘trickles down’ to the workers in return for their products. They consume it. All of it. All that’s left to ‘trickle down’ to the peasants is soot, sewage, scrap and shoddy. Adam Smith in his theory of *Division of Labour* said that if all the members of a firm specialise in what they are best at, the firm is more successful. Correct. He then said that all the employees are better paid. Incorrect. the wage rate of the lowest paid is determined by the hungrier at the factory gate, prepared to work for less. The theory of Comparative Advantage, the justification for international trade between the core and the periphery, says that if countries specialise in what they are best at, more is produced. Correct. It then says that all the workers in both countries are therefore better paid. Incorrect. The higher wages all go to the higher developed country. The wages of the agricultural labourers in the Third World are determined by the millions of their unemployed countrymen. Since trade and industry are supposed to create wealth, the presumption is that they also create employment (by ‘trickle down’). Wrong. Employment is created by the amount of food (and the other necessities of life) which are in the market and can be bought by the workers. More food, more employment. Thus economics is a zero sum game. If we get the jobs (i.e. the food), another country doesn’t get the jobs (i.e. the food). Global employment has gone up, not because of more trade and industry, but because more cash crops are being grown. As I have shown, rulers cause the poverty. If you hand over power to rulers, you will get exploited. All power corrupts. It is only small villages of less than 500 people that don’t need rulers: “When a group exceeds 500 persons it requires some form of policing” [Pfeiffer]. So to end poverty the only option is autonomous, self-sufficient, armed villages. There are three ways of getting from here to there:

- (i) Revolution on the periphery, where the periphery peoples fight for independence;
- (ii) Progressive break-up of the political unit. So the European Union breaks up the individual countries, and then Britain breaks up into Scotland, Ulster, Wales and England, each with their own coinage and Final Appeal. Then these break up into regions with their own coinage and Final

Appeal. Then these break up, etc.; and

(iii) Cutting taxation (first, indirect taxation on the poor) until government has no income and therefore no power. It can't hire a shed to hold a meeting.

Q. Can you explain how, in your view, this exploitation of the periphery has led to the industrialisation of the West and the impoverishment of the Third World.

RH: When the food is taken from the peasants, it is stored in the chief's stockade (the core), later to become castles and then cities. The poorest peasants go to these cities to earn by labour the food taken from the periphery. because of the higher cost of living in cities where water and fuel must be bought, to say nothing of infrastructure costs - policing, prisons etc. - wages would have to be higher. Because wages are higher it is necessary for the core to invent labour-saving machinery, if they are in competition to sell exports. The empires of Rome and China were not in competition with others. They were both self-sufficient. Britain was not. For centuries she was a low-wage periphery. Then Cromwell started to re-arm, financed by direct taxation. This continued for a hundred years to pay for the wars with Holland and France, by which time it was the highest-taxed country in the world with the highest cost of living and the highest wages. Its expensive clothes were being priced out of the market. So it was forced to invent labour-saving machinery, forced by poverty, by the need to import timber, food etc. Labour-saving machinery saves the amount of labour in the product. It does not save the worker labour. He has to still work the same eight hours or more to make the new machine profitable to install. In fact we're working harder and harder. Hunter-gatherers work about two hours a day, cultivators four hours. Athenian farmers only worked half the year, in the growing season. Victorian factory workers, a small percentage of the population, certainly worked the longest hours. Today factory hours taking into account overtime are a little shorter, but the female population is working in the factories as well, so together we're working harder and harder.

Technology is always more advanced in the cities, so as long as the producers can sell enough goods to cover the cost of the machinery, goods from the city will always be cheaper than the periphery goods. Therefore if core goods are allowed in without duties to bring them up to the price of the periphery goods (free trade), the core industries will always destroy the periphery industries. This was the way Africa was de-industrialised. Having been de-industrialised, Africa was encouraged by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to concentrate on agricultural crops according to the theory of Comparative Advantage. Africa now grows food and other crops for the rest of the world. The money goes to the rulers, the peasant having no money cannot buy their own crops. And so starve.

Q. In order to redress the balance you say that the wilful exploitation of the Third World must cease. If and when this comes about it would lead to a dramatic change in our own social and economic circumstances. Can you explain how a revolt by the exploited Third World populations would affect the British Isles, and more specifically how it would force the emergence of a Natural Society?

RH: This is crystal-gazing, which is dodgy. There are far too many unknowns. How long will it take for this analysis to be discussed, let alone accepted? Because of democracy, education and more open government, it gets more difficult to hide from the workers the fact that others are starving to feed them. But how long will that take? Can people reject religion and its demand for obedience? But here's one possible scenario. If the Third World stop sending us their oil, timber, cotton, food

etc. it will stop sending them slowly. And at the same rate we can cut our population by having fewer babies. There are now two major conflicting trends, the trend towards larger economic units against the trend towards smaller national units. The trend towards national units will be stronger at the periphery, which has less to lose industrially. They will impose duties on imported goods from the core to protect their own industries. This will reduce the amount of cash crops coming into the core to pay for them, which will cause unemployment - less food to feed workers, who will migrate to the periphery countries for that food which no longer comes to the core. With less trade government will receive less indirect taxation and so will be able to afford fewer guns, both to arm periphery rulers and to control their own peripheries which will break away, reducing still further the power of the core and reducing the jobs in their cities. The workers will migrate to the countryside, country towns and other countries. And the population will decrease. This happened at the decline and fall of the Western half of the Roman Empire. The Empire had split for organisational reasons. More of the taxation went to Constantinople than to Rome, so Rome had less money for soldiers. When the barbarians came, Rome fell. When the Roman Army left Britain abruptly (and for good as it turned out) in 409-10 to defend Rome against the barbarians, the taxation could not be collected and taken to the towns. So there were no jobs in the towns. In fifty years the towns were all derelict. Industry no longer existed. They forgot the potters' wheel. It had been the army which had produced the demand for sufficient pottery to make the investment in the pottery wheel economic. No army, no wheel. They stopped minting coins and used no money for 150 years. And, it is thought, the population collapsed. Today the army won't leave abruptly, so regression will be much slower.

What holds the economy and the nation-state together is not the army but Adam Smith's economic theory. Who knows how long that will take to be discredited? But when that happens the demand for decentralisation of power will be irresistible. Britain will leave the European Union. Then Scotland, Ulster and Wales will get independent regions with their own coinage and Final Appeal. And they in turn will break up etc. Well, that's a possible tidy scenario. But it takes no account of people, charismatic leaders, stubborn fear of change, epidemics, ecological crises, religion or all the other jokers in the pack. Anything could happen. And nothing at all will happen until the threat of America's bombs is removed and America itself has broken up.

Q Can you give us a glimpse of what such a society will look like? What future is there for Capitalism and its pursuit of constant expansion, economic growth and profit-making?

RH: The shape of society will be determined by population density. If the population of Britain dropped to 15,000, the people would be hunter-gatherers. Least Effort. If the population can drop to 15 million and the people are able to re-arm, they could live in autonomous, self-sufficient villages. A key moment in the renewal is at which point the population re-arms itself. During the Roman Occupation, Scotland was still not disarmed and so was free of Roman domination. When the Roman Army left, presumably some of the population of England was able to re-arm, the north certainly. Kent with links to the Continent stayed disarmed with its Romano-British aristocracy staying in control, with their henchmen and freemen maintaining their monopoly of arms and forcing the peasants to continue producing the surplus. Elsewhere the clan would take back responsibility for peace, justice and welfare. In tribal societies, if someone is murdered the whole extended family of the murderer has to pay recompense to the whole of the victim's extended family - 50 head of cattle, for example, shared out. So the murderer would be very unpopular in his own family, which is the sanction for good behaviour in an Anarchist society. There would be 'chiefs', or perhaps 'spokesmen' would be a better word, and a peck order of respect but not obedience. The chief acts as spokesman of the group to outsiders; but within the group "one word

from the chief and everyone does as they please.” Without mobility of labour, which has destroyed the extended family, that family can be rebuilt and the welfare state dispensed with.

Capitalism can only exist when the strong are separate from the weak and no longer expected to help the weak in an interdependent society, so that individual greed is allowed full rein. When one depends on the rest of the group for one’s plot of land, when one is expected to share rather than exchange in an interdependent society Capitalism, economic growth and profit-making are impossible. It is money and private ownership of land which makes Capitalism invincible.

Q. Is your idea of a Natural Society built upon Natural Order? Do you believe that the world has a Natural Order dictated by nature?

RH: The only things that are natural are what you don’t have to make laws about. You don’t have to make a law that apples fall downwards. You don’t have to make a law that people should live in villages. So there are laws of nature such as gravity or survival of the fittest. But there are no laws which say that Blacks should not intermarry with Whites. And who is going to say what this Natural Order is? The Star Chamber? The Politburo? The Chairman? Professors selected for their opinions? What’s to stop the Committee of public safety decreeing that slavery was natural, as Christianity once did? It’s the high road to tyranny?

Q. In Issue #14 of Alternative Green [p.10] you state that “although racism is inevitable and universal, in a multi-racial society it is disastrous and must be suppressed. Peace is more important than racial purity. To prevent the inevitable injustice meted out to minorities, it is necessary to intermarry as quickly as possible”. Firstly, why do you advocate the destruction of that which nature has created, that is, racial diversity through intermarriage, and is this not contrary to the Natural Order? Secondly, exactly who or what is going to suppress those of us who are fundamentally opposed to racial integration?

RH: Since I don’t accept your concept of the Natural Order, it can’t be contrary to it. In order to preserve the peace in a multi-racial society, people, individually, must suppress their own racism, as nearly all people already do.

Q. A fair reflection of our position would be that racial integration is a product of the internationalist ideology of both Capitalists and Marxists, and that loyalty to Race, Nation, Region, Culture and Tradition are natural barriers to the imperialist, globalist tendency and must be encouraged, not destroyed. It would seem that you concur with this view on all points but Race. Why is Race the exception for you?

RH: Yes, I concur with your view on all points but Race, because Race alone of all these factors is all mixed in our multi-racial society. To unmix them would cause far greater unhappiness than all the capitalist exploitation. By concentrating on all the other factors we can still repel Capitalism. And anyway, you can’t use racism against Capitalism because most of the Capitalists are the same race.

Q. Internationalists, of every description, have no understanding of the relationship that exists between the people, generations of people, and the land from which they are drawn, i.e. the concept of Blood and Soil. This lack of understanding leads them to advocate a global society with a rootless populace, devoid of all sense of Ancestry, Heritage and Tradition. What, if any, is your understanding of the bond that exists between people and land, and more importantly, do

you think it will have any significance in the emergence of the Natural Society?

RH: I have no attachment to any land. I only know where most of my great-grandfathers came from. So do most other people, so in Britain there is little bond between Blood and Soil nor will it have any significance in the emergence of the Natural Society. It will have great significance in its continuation; but it is an exclusive idea and it looks as if I'm going to be one of those excluded.

Q. We have a specific view of how society should be governed through what we call Meritocracy, or Natural Selection. This would appear to concur with your own view of a Natural Society being ordered through hierarchy, or the peck order. Will you please explain your understanding of hierarchy?

RH: All power corrupts. If you allow yourself to be governed, you will be exploited. The object of The Natural Society was to show how people have, and can, live without government or Meritocracy. In communities of less than 500 there is no need for policing or government. They would be, as are all 'primitive' societies of this size, Anarchies. There would be no Meritocracy. There would be a peck order of influence and respect, but no government, no obedience. The confusion happens because of two usages of the word 'hierarchy'; one meaning obedience to superiors (which you, I think, mean and I don't), the other meaning peck order as observed in all animal groups (which I mean and you don't). But it's necessary for me to go on about hierarchy/peck order because it explains the consumer society, whereby one's place in the peck order is determined in an anonymous society by what can afford to buy - how big is one's car? the function of the peck order in animal societies and ours is to minimise fighting and protect the weak by the ritual of building the peck order - conventional means to conventional goals. So we don't have to fight every time to get the best seat. Conspicuous consumption is vital to creating the peck order and keeping the peace. But peck order doesn't mean government.

Q. We have noticed that you place great importance on the role of the family within your vision of a Natural Society, but why is the family so central to your theory of how society will be ordered and what role will it play in keeping the peace?

RH: In an Anarchist society it is the family, the extended family, cousins, uncles, great aunts who provide the sanction for good behaviour and welfare in times of difficulty. There are no policemen in an Anarchy and no social workers. If parents don't seem to be coping with a child, the child is moved up the road to stay with auntie, not put into a children's home. Auntie takes the child because neighbours, friends and family think she should. There is no such pressure today. No one knows. And bringing shame on the family is the most important sanction for good behaviour.

Q. It would appear that a Natural Society based upon agrarian self-sufficiency and non-exploitation, such as you advocate, can only work and be maintained if the population level is rigorously controlled. You have mentioned a specific figure for a ceiling limit on population growth within the British Isles for a Natural Society. What is this limit and how did you come to arrive at such a figure?

RH: About 16 million. The United Nations says (I can't remember where) that each self-sufficient family needs 8 acres. Assuming four children, that's four per family. There are about 33 million acres of farmland extending rough grazing which is enough for 4 million families, which is about 16 million people.

Q. You state that an increase in self-sufficient communities would see a natural decline in population. Can you explain how this would occur? More specifically, what methods would be

used?

RH: It is in the community's interest to keep the population low. With fewer mouths to feed you don't need to grow so much food. It's less work. About primitive societies: "It appears as if several of these societies strove to maximise labour productivity. This involved limiting the population to the number that could be supported with a fairly modest effort. The means of achieving this limitation varied. Sexual taboos - e.g. the prohibition of intercourse during a nursing period of 3-5 years was common, as were various abortion methods. Different ways of legitimising abortions also appears to have existed. The condition for the functioning of the system was that the land was collectively owned and that the food was distributed according to need" [Anell and Nygren]. Specifically, it's impossible to say what methods would be used. That's a judgement for each community.

Q. Can you explain whilst on the one hand you oppose the power of the State and the enforcement of the laws of obedience, and on the other you praise the "responsible lead" [AG #13, p.18] taken by China in the area of population control? Do you imagine that the Chinese populace would ever countenance supporting such a policy if people were not forced to spend the whole of their lives looking down the barrel of a gun? How do you equate decrees issued by a Marxist dictatorship with a free society?

RH: This is three different questions: (i) should I, an Anarchist, obey the law and therefore recommend others to obey the law?; (ii) is the Chinese law to have one child a good law?; and (iii) should such a law be introduced in other countries?

Let's look at each in turn. Firstly should I, an Anarchist, obey the law? Society, without policing and the law, is only possible in communities less than about 500 people. Since I live in a city of about 50,000, law is necessary otherwise chaos would ensue and there would be no money for food, and violence would be uncontrolled. So I obey the law because otherwise I would starve or be killed. secondly, is the Chinese law to have only one child a good law? Is it a good thing that as many families as possible should have only one child (it's not a matter of freedom. You would be no more free to have as many babies as you like in a self-sufficient village as in China. In one you are constrained by public opinion. In the other by the law)? But I just don't know whether it is possible to make fair laws about it. So the 'lead' which China gives of only having one child is a good one. The law is debatable. Thirdly, because China has been under heavy rule for three thousand years (not just Marxism) the Chinese people are apparently used to obeying extreme laws. Perhaps other peoples are not. So whether it is a just law or not, it probably wouldn't work in other countries anyway.

Q. Would you say that you were opposed to technology in the way that the nineteenth-century Luddites were, or do you see a role - possibly a limited role - for technology in a Natural Society?

RH: I would miss newspapers and the radio etc. I've no objection to technology itself. So in principle I'd be quite happy to see computers etc. in villages. But when everybody's got their own land, no one is going to work in the factories. we may like computers, but they simply won't be available.

Q. We noticed your comment about feminism being a luxury for the middle classes in a Police State. What do you mean by this and what would be the role of women in a Natural Society?

RH: The main function of the police is to preserve the property of those who have, the middle

classes, from those who have not, the poor. As poor women have found, they can expect no sympathy and little protection from the police. So they need the protection of a strong male or at least one that looks strong, macho. The middle class women get, and depend on, the protection of the police so they don't need, and can afford to denigrate, strong macho men. An Amazonian Indian, on television, said that men and women were equal, unambiguously. Probably the smaller the group, the more equality there would be between the sexes.

Q. What do you think of veganism and vegetarianism?

RH: We have incisor teeth and a short gut which means we're designed to be omnivores. The further from the equator one gets, the more impractical is vegetarianism. Even in Britain it depends in the Winter on beans imported from warmer countries for protein. For Eskimos it's impossible. And in temperate climates the only materials to keep warm are feathers, fur and wool. Cotton won't be available. So animals are going to have to be exploited.

Q. You say that there are two methods of activism necessary for a change over to a Natural Society, the first being to elect MP's who are committed to cutting government power by cutting taxation. Don't you think it is misleading to ask people to support the System's politicians on this basis? Do you see the System's power simply diminishing as the new autonomous communities multiply? Do you think there is a role for revolutionary vanguards?

RH: Cutting taxes and subdividing the political units go hand in hand. No autonomous, armed, self-sufficient villages will be allowed by any sort of government. They will only happen as government loses control of its peripheries. If one is to recommend a gradualist approach such as cutting taxes, it's no use being all purist and refusing to take part. I don't know what a revolutionary vanguard is. If it's persuading people of revolutionary ideas, that's fine. But using violence won't work. I think it will be counter-productive. It will turn people against the ideas at this point. When sufficient people agree with the ideas, violence on the periphery to fight for independence would work.

Q. The second method of activism is revolution in the exploited Third World. Accepting that the present economic system is unjust and should not, even if it could, be maintained, what is the possibility of a revolt by the Third World populace? Would not the internationalist system use everything it had to prop up friendly elements within what are effectively satellite states?

RH: Yes, the internationalist system would use everything it had. But it hasn't worked in Somalia or Somaliland, nor in Liberia. Perhaps the Capitalists think they have less to lose in Africa? It is not true, but their economic liberty would tell them that it is. So they are not willing to risk television filming body bags coming home. So perhaps Africa will quietly drop out of sight like Somaliland? Free and no fuss. All we notice is another radio station off the air. And fewer crops coming from the Third World. Britain left India because, faced with Gandhi's truths, it lost the will to exploit. So the important thing is to face the internationalists with the truth and undermine their convictions.

Q. Is the Natural Society inevitable?

RH: No, it depends on the death of religion.

Q. Finally, for those who wish to know more can you recommend any books or literature containing further information on self-sufficiency and ecology, etc.?

RH: Both Green and Anarchist literature is awful. the Anarchists present a view of human nature

that is quite beautiful and hopelessly unconvincing. Green literature is smugly self-righteous and without answers. For self-sufficiency early John Seymour is a delight. He became the guru of self-sufficiency, but I haven't read his later books.

[1]Editor's Note: The original header was not in italic but was present when the article was first published online.

[2]The Crusader was a magazine of the English Nationalist Movement, a Post-Strasserist Third Position group; this group would later become the National Revolutionary Faction and eventually pave the way for the National-Anarchist Movement.

<u>CENTRALISTS:</u>	<u>DECENTRALISTS:</u>
1) Equality	1) Liberty
2) Economies of Scale	2) Small is Beautiful
3) Higher Taxes to Increase Government Power	3) Lower Taxes to Cut Government Power and therefore Redistribute Wealth
4) Free Trade	4) Protectionism
5) Pro-GATT	5) Anti-GATT
6) Pro-Technology	6) Anti-Technology
7) Pro-European Union	7) Anti-European Union
8) The Core	8) The Periphery
9) Capitalists	9) Nationalists
10) Liberals	10) Anarchists
11) Marxists	11) Greens/SNP
12) Conservative, Labour, Political Parties, BNP	12) Religions, Liberal Charities, Regionalists, Tribals/Hippies
13) Fascists	13) Racialists
14) Socialists	14) Third Positionists
15) Internationalists	15) Survivalists
16) Workers	16) Peasants
17) Townspeople	17) Country people
18) Third World Rulers	18) Third World People

PEOPLE WHO WISH TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT RICHARD HUNT'S IDEAS SHOULD READ THE FOLLOWING BOOKLETS:

- * *The Theory of Alternative Green*
- * *The Natural Society*
- * *Who's Starving Them?*^[3]

^[3]*Both the chart and recommended booklets were included with the interview.*

WHY ANARCHISM?

In an interview with Troy Southgate^[1] during the mid-1990s I tried to show how government caused the poverty of the periphery by removing the crops by force and then by taxation, creating the wealth at the core; how its taxation on trade, to increase its power, caused a high cost of living, therefore high wages, high labour costs and labour-saving technology to reduce those labour costs. It is this industrialisation which is causing terrible damage to the high population of the developed world.

The killer argument against industrialisation is that it means harder work. American workers work the longest hours (except for Japan, which I don't know about). What I didn't talk about was the damage done by government to the small, rooted community, the tribe. The community had three functions: defence, the sanction for good behaviour and welfare.

The first form of government is a local bully and his mates, a 'hero' and his companions, who force the local population to hand over the results of their hunting and gathering. To forestal any objection, most of them are disarmed. This is the first nail in the coffin of the community - it has lost its function of defence. The ruler, with the fiat of religion, then makes its laws to protect his position, including laws governing his subjects' behaviour. These are administered by 'justice'. This is the second nail in the coffin of the small community. It is no longer the sanction for good behaviour. Amongst groups, without leaders and an imposed system of 'justice', unacceptable behaviour is discouraged by shame, ridicule and, ultimately, exile. Crime is not so much punished as made amends for. If someone kills someone, his whole extended family has to give 50 cattle to the extended family of the victim. This is a strong sanction against killing people on potential murderers by their own family. In today's judicial system a crime is punished but no attempt is made to make amends. A fine is imposed, but it goes to the State, not to the victim.

The final nail in the coffin of the small community came relatively recently. Mobility of labour and thus the provision of welfare by the State. The State now gets half its income and therefore power from indirect taxes, taxes on trade. The more goods are traded, the more taxes the government receives, the more powerful it is. This is justified by the nonsense theory of conventional economics that trade creates wealth which trickles down to the poorest. So the poor are forced to hand over their crops which are consumed by the core. All that's left to trickle back to the periphery is soot, sewage, scrap and second-hand clothes. To increase traded crops even more, the poor are driven off their land by Acts of Enclosure and into the cities. This is called Mobility of Labour. Cut off from their communities, they can no longer rely on help in times of trouble. To avoid revolution, governments have to provide State welfare instead. Thus a community now has little use. The State has hijacked all its functions: defence, justice and welfare.

But the State's take-over of the sanction for good behaviour doesn't work. On the one hand we are no longer constrained by the opinions of our grandparents. We are no longer ashamed because they don't know; they are so far away. And the State doesn't admit that the community provides any useful sanction for good behaviour; indeed, it forbids it. But on the other hand its police don't care if we beat our wives or husbands; they don't care whether schoolboy bullies are 'faxing' their peers, or

staff mistreating orphans or old people. They're not bothered if the poor are mugging each other. Their function is to protect the property of the rich and their middle classes. While we are no longer constrained by the opinions of our relatives who are far away, nor are we constrained by the police. So we get a soaring crime rate and the breakdown of social life.

As individuals we no longer need the community. The State provides defence, some justice and welfare. So we don't need to put up with the constraints of the community, the interference of our neighbours and relatives. We are free! We can make as many babies as we like. We can tear down the restrictions of conventional behaviour. We can be ourselves! We can deride the old and their old-fashioned standards, and the traditions that held the community together. It makes a certain sense. We no longer need the community. The State does the community's job. The fact that social life hasn't completely broken down is because most of us still behave because of what our parents, friends and relatives would think. But more and more people try to forget this constraint, behave unacceptably and make social life impossible.

So government, by destroying the small community by hijacking its functions, is the cause of increasing social breakdown. It is also destroying the traditional knowledge gained over the millennia and handed down from generation to generation to generation in the community. Nowadays they even have to teach parenting skills to young mothers because their mothers, aunts and grandmothers aren't close by to help and hand down hard-won traditional knowledge and skills. Dysfunctional families are not a modern phenomenon. But previously, if it was seen that a family was not coping with its children, aunts, sisters and parents would have stepped in and suggested that a child stay with them for a while. A child was not, then, a product of a nuclear family, but a tribe, all contributing. There's an American saying: 'You need a village to bring up a child.' Today the villages and tribes and extended families have been destroyed by government actions. A child of a dysfunctional family has no escape. So he is abused and grows up an abuser. Blood relationship is obviously the basis of the extended family and community. But it is not essential. Every community is able to incorporate a number of unrelated individuals.

So government is the cause of poverty and social breakdown. How do we get rid of government? By cutting its lifeblood, taxation. Without taxation government can't even hire a hall to meet in, let alone employ police to enforce its laws. At the same time we have to cut the size of the political unit, until progressively, we reach the autonomous, self-sufficient, armed village. Clearly there is not room for many of those, so at the same time we have to cut the population by at least three-quarters. And that still doesn't leave any room for the animals. Should animals have any space? Some think that Anarchism is impractical, that we have to have rulers. But for hundreds of thousands of years humans have lived and thrived without them. All over the world anthropologists have found that nearly all hunter-gatherer societies don't have rulers. Anarchism is very practical. It stops poverty. It stops social breakdown and is painlessly achieved by cutting taxes, the population and the size of the political unit.

[1]Editor's Note: Richard Hunt was referring to the previous interview in this collection.

